

What They Do

Clinical Research Associates help design and monitor clinical research projects including clinical trials that test new pharmaceuticals on humans. They write detailed documents called 'protocols' showing how a clinical trial is to be conducted. In some cases, these workers help design experiments using drugs on animals, a process called pre-clinical testing.

Clinical Research Associates help recruit and screen human subjects for clinical trials. They help develop and obtain informed consent from subjects and manage patient participation in the trials. They may issue payments to study participants.

Their general duties include training and coordinating the activities of staff, visiting clinical testing sites to ensure facilities are adequate, and mentoring junior staff. They maintain regular contact with clinical trial staff to ensure regulations are followed and they participate in government audits.

They may also evaluate, maintain and analyze research databases. They may write grant proposals and prepare budgets. They help ensure clinical trials are conducted in compliance with government regulations and ethical standards. They may be asked to make presentations at scientific conferences and may write articles for technical journals.

Clinical Research Associates work for pharmaceutical companies, biotechnology firms, medical device manufacturers, medical research universities, government agencies, and contract research organizations. Large organizations have several levels of Clinical Research Associate positions leading to senior and management positions.

*Career Research Associates in the biotech industry share characteristics of Medical Scientists and All Other Life Scientists. Detailed descriptions of these occupations may be found in the Occupational Information Network (O*NET) at online.onetcenter.org.*

Important skills, knowledge, and abilities include:

- ▶ Mathematics – Knowledge of arithmetic, algebra, geometry, calculus, statistics, and their applications.
- ▶ Active Learning – Understanding the implications of new information for both current and future problem-solving and decision-making.
- ▶ Science – Using scientific rules and methods to solve problems.
- ▶ Instructing – Teaching others how to do something.
- ▶ Reading Comprehension – Understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work related documents.
- ▶ Speaking – Talking to others to convey information effectively.

Training/Requirements

- ▶ Bachelor or master's degree in life sciences, health field, or RN degree.
- ▶ Possess up to two years experience in medical research, pharmaceutical research, or nursing.
- ▶ Voluntary certification enhances employability. (See **Additional Sources of Information.**)

Clinical Research Associates

Biotechnology Careers

What's the California Job Outlook?

While the Bureau of Labor Statistics does not collect data on Clinical Research Associates, the occupations listed below are found in the biotechnology industry and have similar duties to Clinical Research Associates. The California outlook and wage figures are drawn from all industries and represent occupations comparable to Clinical Research Associates.

Standard Occupational Classification	Estimated Number of Workers 2002	Estimated Number of Workers 2012	Average Annual Openings	2005 Wage Range (per hour)
Medical Scientists, Except Epidemiologists				
19-1042	9,800	13,200	510	\$26.56 to \$44.07
Life Scientists, All Other				
19-1099	5,800	7,400	260	\$27.02 to \$40.97

These figures do not include self-employment.

Average annual openings include new jobs plus openings due to separations.

Source: www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov, Employment Projections by Occupation and OES Employment & Wages by Occupation, Labor Market Information Division, Employment Development Department.

Additional Sources of Information

Society of Clinical Research Associates
(800) 762-7292
www.socra.org

Association of Clinical Research Professionals
(703) 254-8100
www.acrpnet.org

Society for Clinical Trials
(410) 433-4722
www.sctweb.org

Occupational Information Network (O*NET)
<http://online.onetcenter.org>